DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 216 531 FL 012 902

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TITLE Guide to Conducting a Language Immersion/Homestay Program.
INSTITUTION American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE 82
NOTE 13p.
AVAILABLE FROM ACTFL, 385 Warburton Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706 ($3.00; $2.00 to ACTFL members).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cultural Awareness; French; *Immersion Programs; Secondary Education; *Second Language Instruction; *Student Exchange Programs; *Study Abroad; Teaching Guides; Travel

ABSTRACT

This handbook, designed to assist foreign language teachers in planning and executing a language immersion/homestay program for their students, is based on a successful program in Switzerland undertaken by Northport (New York) High School French teachers in 1980. The material is presented in three parts: (1) preparation of the exchange, including an outline of the objectives, the background on the experience, assessing student and parent interest, establishing criteria for forming a student group, getting administrative approval, publicizing the exchange within the community, fund raising, arranging for the trip, matching students with their host families in Switzerland, and the orientation program; (2) an account of the two weeks in Switzerland, which covers the logistics of the students' itinerary and activities, budget, liaison with host families, ongoing evaluation, and group lessons and meetings; and (3) follow-up activities, such as the post-trip evaluation, publicity and preparations for the reverse portion of the exchange. Samples of the documents used for communication with all parties involved are appended. (AMH)

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ED216531

Guide to Conducting a Language Immersion/Homestay Program

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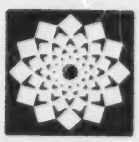

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PREFACE

This handbook is designed to assist foreign language teachers in planning and executing a language immersion/homestay program for their students. It is based upon a successful program undertaken by Northport High School French teachers in 1980. Since considerable professional time is required to plan such an educational experience, we feel that a guide of this nature will be an invaluable tool and timesaver for other members of the profession initiating similar ventures. The guide includes both a detailed accounting of the preparations and some sample materials which can be adapted to the needs of any school system.

We would gratefully like to acknowledge the assistance and support we received in preparing this exchange program from Ms. Joan Miller, District Chairperson of Foreign Languages, Northport Schools, Northport, New York; Mr. George Iber of Northport High School; and Mrs. Maggie Cassidy of Brattleboro High School, Brattleboro, Vermont.

I. PREPARATION OF THE EXCHANGE

In March 1980 the Northport High School Foreign Language Department began an exchange program with Geneva, Switzerland. We have written this handbook as a résumé of the first half of the exchange, which consisted of a two-week immersion homestay visit of 22 Northport students to Geneva. We became involved in an exchange because we felt strongly that crucial foreign language objectives are best attained through such an experience.

OBJECTIVES OF THE EXPERIENCE

- Provide an authentic language and cultural environment to intensify student motivation to learn and use foreign language.
- Provide intensive practice in the foreign language through total immersion in a French-speaking environment for an extended period.
- Deepen international understanding and mutual respect as a result of an experience in a new culture and the formation of reciprocal friendships.
- Increase student awareness of the needs and interests of others by integration in a new family and by working with a group to plan and carry out the entire exchange program.
- Help students develop greater maturity and responsibility as a result of the total exchange experience.

CONCEPTION—HOW THE PROGRAM BEGAN

Through a contact made years ago in Geneva, Switzerland by Frances Killelea, the Northport Foreign Language Department was approached by teachers of the Collège de Saussure in Geneva regarding the possibility of establishing an exchange program betwen the two high schools. Initial letters were exchanged in this regard during the summer months of 1979. The project was widely discussed among department members, all of whom recognized the significance of such an experience in student foreign language learning, and it was decided to accept this offer pending an assessment of student interest.

ASSESSING STUDENT AND PARENTAL INTEREST, ESTABLISHING CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION, FORMING A STUDENT GROUP

Through the use of several "feeler" dittos, French Regents and advanced students were polled as to their potential interest in such an opportunity. Once we established that a significant amount of interest did exist among Northport French students, selection criteria were drawn up, as well as requirements for students who wanted to become involved in the program (see Appendix 1). An informational meeting was set up for interested students and their parents, at which time a more definite commitment was requested in the form of a $50 deposit (for advanced students and seniors) or an interview application (for Regents students). Information was distributed on objectives, criteria, and requirements.

Advanced students were given automatic priority in acceptance to the program. Regents students were required to undergo an interview with the four French teachers in the department, and to submit in advance a brief statement discussing their reasons for wanting to participate in the exchange.

Before interviews began, the four French teachers clarified characteristics which they would look for in students in order to determine their readiness to participate in such a program and the degree of benefit which they could derive from it. Such characteristics included maturity, flexibility, open-mindedness, self-reliance, willingness to learn, and general enthusiasm. During the course of the interviews, students were confronted with hypothetical situations which they might encounter once in the foreign culture, and asked to react and comment. They were also requested to discuss in general their reasons for wanting to participate, and any pertinent experiences which they felt might have prepared them for such a program.

A group of 22 students was finally selected, consisting of 12 advanced and 10 Regents students. We were restricted to this number due to the availability of Swiss homes for our students.

The student group selected was required to participate in a lengthy orientation process to best prepare them for a homestay immersion in another culture. This process is discussed in detail in a later section.

SECURING ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL FOR THE PROPOSED EXCHANGE

Official approval had to be obtained from the high school principal and the Northport Board of Education before we could proceed with detailed planning. A letter was submitted to the principal describing the objectives of the program, a provision for missed class work, criteria for selection into the program, possible activities during the exchange, and a tentative budget for the program (see Appendix 2).

PUBLICIZING THE EXCHANGE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

We began publicity as early as possible to inform the community of the exchange and its potential benefits for Northport students. We wrote articles on a continuous basis for local newspapers and newsletters to increase community

support for the goals of the exchange and to keep people aware of the ongoing nature of exchange preparations, including orientation and fund-raising activities.

We publicized the exchange program within the high school as well, so that colleagues and students would be aware of the program and its objectives. A letter was sent to all teachers explaining the program, and the variety of fund-raising activities made students and staff aware of the existence of the exchange.

RAISING MONEY

As the exchange was originally planned, excursion costs for students were to be covered by the hosting group, both here and in Switzerland. Hence, the initial purpose of the fund-raising process was to raise enough money to cover sightseeing and activity costs for the Swiss students during their Northport visit. Subsequently, we received notification that the Swiss student group would be unable to visit the United States. Since we decided to proceed with the American homestay in Switzerland on a one-way basis for the time being, the fund-raising goal then became raising enough money to pay for our own excursions in Switzerland, as well as for the mandatory school liability insurance.

Fund-raising projects to be undertaken by the 22 students were planned (see Appendix 3). Students and colleagues were consulted and possibilities were discussed. We decided to focus fund-raising upon a weekly bake sale, Valentine's Day activities (particularly a school-wide carnation sale), and a record drawing. Requirements were established for student participation in fund-raising, and a tentative budget was set, based upon excursion costs as estimated by the Swiss. We solicited the support of local merchants and parents of students making the trip. Tasks were apportioned to students, along with specific deadlines and goals to be met.

All fund-raising activities were publicized in local newspapers as well as throughout the school. Exact records were kept of the degree to which each student met fund-raising goals. We established a school bank account and kept detailed records.

TRIP LOGISTICS

Flight: It was necessary through cost-shopping to determine the most economical and most direct flight options for Geneva. We decided to use (instead of charters which might have resulted in lost time) a regularly-scheduled Apex fare via Swissair, the only carrier flying directly to Switzerland. Arrangements had to be made for group ticketing, a schedule of payments was set for the students, and parents were kept up to date on flight and cost information by a series of bulletins.

Excursion arrangements: From a list of proposed excursions furnished by the Swiss, we selected those which we felt would be the most valid for our students based on recommendations we obtained from teachers who had been involved in previous exchanges. A poll of parents was taken to determine the maximum amount they were willing to spend on excursions for their children. Once that figure was obtained, a definitive excursion program was agreed upon with the Swiss.

Required insurance: Several types of insurance needed to be considered. First, school officials were contacted to arrange for the mandatory school liability insurance coverage for the group. Second, through the use of a letter, parents were requested to contact their private health insurance companies to verify that their children were medically covered while abroad. In addition, parents were informed of potential air-fare cancellation penalties with an Apex fare and the recommendation was made to arrange their own trip cancellation insurance coverage if they so desired.

Communication with parents: After the inital informational meeting, parental presence was not required at orientation meetings. However, parents were kept informed of developments through dittos distributed to students and by means of a general mailing several weeks before the trip. In that mailing were included the following:

- a letter recapping orientation activities and goals, and summarizing trip details to date;
- an official participant's waiver and release form;
- a copy of the student's make-up assignment sheet;
- a parental pre-trip (health) questionnaire;
- an air information sheet.

In addition, all homes had previously been provided with a phone chain to be used to contact other group members both before departure and once in Europe. All parents were requested to attend the final orientation meeting, at which time last-minute logistics were discussed and an emergency contact information sheet for Europe was distributed. Throughout the entire trip preparation process, we attempted to keep the lines of communication open with parents, to keep them up to date on all aspects of the plans (see Appendices 4-7).

Provision for missed class work: The importance of making up two weeks of school work was consistently stressed to the students. To assist them in organizing their make-up work and to provide their teachers the opportunity to be informed of the projected absence dates, we drafted a special make-up assignment sheet (see Appendix 6). Students were to submit one sheet to each teacher for clarification of assignments. Teachers were made aware of the purpose of the assignment sheets by a letter. Parents were also informed that we had made provisions for missed school work to be completed. We reviewed completed sheets and attempted to oversee student progress of make-up work while in Switzerland.

Provision for teacher absence: The two teachers involved in the two-week homestay in Switzerland contacted substitutes with considerable advance notice. Class lessons for the two weeks were planned, and meetings were set up with the substitutes to discuss all plans and insure maximum continuity of learning.

Lists and checklists: A checklist for the students was drawn up to assist them in accomplishing the most important pre-trip tasks, such as obtaining a passport, travellers checks, Swiss currency, a gift for the host family, etc. (see Appendix 8). Students were also provided with a suggested packing list, since in most cases it was their first experience abroad.

The teachers kept a record of student preparation for the trip, attendance at orientation meetings, etc., by means of their own checklists.

MATCHING STUDENTS WITH THEIR SWISS COUNTERPARTS

Since the exchange was to be a two-week homestay, we felt it important to achieve the maximum possible compatibility between the Swiss host students and the American guest. A successful matching would facilitate the reverse portion of the exchange (Switzerland to Northport) as well. We received from Switzerland a packet of letters in which each student had sketched his or her "portrait." At one orientation meeting, we requested our own students to write a description of themselves, including any personal "requirements" (allergies to cats, cigarette smoke, etc.). Using these two sets of portraits and the considerable knowledge of our students which we had gained through orientation meetings and fund-raising projects, we attempted to match compatible personalities and interests. American students were then given the name and portrait of their Swiss counterpart and were encouraged to write a letter of introduction.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE EXCHANGE—ORIENTATION PROGRAM

Students selected for the exchange were required to participate completely in a series of orientation meetings. The orientation program was designed to prepare students as fully as possible for the new experience of total immersion in a foreign culture. Goals and exercises during orientation focused on the following areas, although all meetings included trip logistics as well.

Acquainting the students with one another and fostering group cooperation and solidarity: Various written and oral exercises were prepared for this purpose. They included questionnaires on student interests (shared aloud in French), nonverbal paired "interviews" during which students were instructed to communicate information about themselves without using words, verbal paired "interviews" in French, and completion exercises in French to lead students to express aspects of their personalities. Fund-raising activities (while they extended beyond the orientation meetings) also helped to create a sense of community among the group members as they worked together toward a common goal.

Assisting students to amass cultural information: After researching Swiss politics, geography, economics, and history, we prepared packets to acquaint students with significant aspects of the Swiss culture. Students were assigned short reports on major figures, events, and concepts in Swiss civilization to familiarize themselves further with the country in which they would be living. In addition, arrangements were made for a presentation by a social studies teacher to enable students to compare the two nations insightfully.

Sharpening skills in French: Vocabulary-building exercises and imaginary conversational situations were designed for the students. They were to use *French for Travellers* (Editions Berlitz: Lausanne, Switzerland, 1974) as reference tools in order to prepare for role-playing (e.g., in the post office, at the bank, or the telephone). Homework assignments were reviewed and practiced orally during orientation sessions.

Developing students' ability to deal with the new experience of total cultural immersion: Through discussion and the preparation of a packet entitled "Americans Overseas," we assisted students in becoming aware of areas of difference in the new culture, reactions which they might experience, "culture shock" and antidotes. We also helped students clarify their goals for the exchange and analyze its potential benefits to them. Recommended behavior patterns and "do's and don'ts" of the new culture were discussed. Finally, we tried to develop in each student a sense of tolerance, open-mindedness, and acceptance of difference.[1]

Pre-trip evaluation: To help measure student progress toward goals, we distributed an evaluation of skills and knowledge to be completed prior to the trip. Students rated themselves on various French grammatical and vocabulary topics, and on their knowledge of Switzerland. The evaluation was compared to a post-trip evaluation upon their return.

II. THE TWO WEEKS IN SWITZERLAND

LOGISTICS—STUDENT ITINERARY AND ACTIVITIES

Once in Switzerland, students and teachers alike followed an extensive program of excursions and activities to acquaint students with the most important aspects of Swiss culture, economics, etc. In addition, students attended school and attempted to become closely integrated with their Swiss host families by participating in family activities. Meanwhile, the teachers were occupied with a series of responsibilities and tasks. For every excursion which had been planned, reconfirmation and checking of logistics were necessary. In addition, so that students could best benefit from their limited free time, they were presented with a list of other sightseeing options. In order to compile this list, we visited supplementary museums and sites of interest to determine their appropriateness.

BUDGET

Detailed accounting of costs and expenditures for excursions and other necessities of the group had to be done on a daily basis. This would enable us to draw up a detailed budget for the parents of our students upon our return to the United Sates.

LIAISON WITH HOST FAMILIES, STUDENT WELL BEING

To ensure a positive homestay experience for each student, a great deal of time was spent maintaining contact with 22 host families and keeping abreast of our students' integration in those families. Through constant communication and questioning, we attempted to learn of potential areas of difficulty and resolve problems in the incipient stages. Phone calls were made to each family urging them to feel free to contact us with any concerns they might have. Students were

also encouraged to discuss with us both the positive and negative aspects of their experience on a daily basis.

In particular cases, goodwill visits were made to certain families, and in general, all opportunities to strengthen relationships between the group and its hosts (families and school personnel) were taken. This involved daytime and evening get-togethers with parents and staff, the purchase of gifts for parents who were particularly helpful on tours, letters of thanks, and other diplomatic gestures.

ONGOING EVALUATION

To keep informed of student reaction and progress during the exchange, and to help students clarify their goals in an ongoing way, a series of evaluative questionnaires was devised and distributed during the course of the two weeks (see Appendix 9). In addition, an inductive cultural packet was prepared for students to heighten their ability to observe and learn from their surroundings.

CLASS LESSONS AND GROUP MEETINGS

It was constructive to meet frequently with the entire group to clarify trip goals and objectives as previously discussed during the orientation meetings. Group lessons were also held to reinforce the attitude-building process begun during orientation as well, i.e., dealing with culture shock situations, stereotyping, etc. Scheduling logistics from day to day, feedback and evaluation, and budget details also required the teachers to plan regular meetings with the student group.

III. FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES UPON RETURNING

POST-TRIP EVALUATION

To determine the degree to which the objectives of the immersion program were met, to provide a mechanism for student feedback, and to gather ideas for the improvement of future programs, a questionnaire was prepared and distributed to the students shortly after their return. Students were asked to evaluate the orientation process they underwent, aspects of the language experience in their Swiss family, and elements of the sightseeing program in Swizerland. In addition, sections of the questionnaire dealing with skills and knowledge were designed to be compared with the pre-trip evaluation, in order to gauge student progress in these areas. The questionnaire results were overwhelmingly positive in terms of student reaction to the total experience, as well as their perception of individual progress made in language skills.

Swiss host families were also polled to ascertain their reaction to the homestay, for example the degree to which the experience matched their expectations, their positive and negative reactions, etc. Finally, American parents were asked somewhat later to describe what they felt their children had gained in various areas (speaking ability, learning about themselves, adaptation skills) and to suggest improvement for future planning.

PUBLICITY

Retrospective articles dealing with the trip experience were written for local newspapers and newsletters, and interviews with students were arranged. Student slides and photos were reviewed and the most representative were selected for use in shows and albums designed to inform all interested parties of the nature and scope of the program.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE REVERSE PORTION OF THE EXCHANGE

Early in the planning stages of the program, the Swiss had indicated that they would be unable to undertake a return visit to the United States as had been initially conceived for a true exchange. But during the American homestay in Geneva, reaction among both the Swiss and the Americans was so positive that the possibility of constructing a Swiss group for a reciprocal visit to the States was widely discussed. After the return from Switzerland, the Swiss confirmed their interest in visiting their former guests. Correspondence continued between the Northport and Geneva teachers. The results of a Swiss parent questionnaire were reviewed in terms of planning the reverse portion of the exchange as well as improving orientation for future homestays in Switzerland. Cohesion within the American group was encouraged through get-togethers. When definite confirmation of the Swiss intent to visit Northport was received, group members were polled to ascertain the availability of housing and to gather their suggestions regarding the excursion program for the reciprocal visit. Logistics were planned.

The Swiss visit to the United States did indeed take place in October 1980, although that portion of the exchange is not within the scope of this handbook. The two week reverse stay confirmed the many benefits of the exchange concept. As a result of the expereince, our students developed in many areas, from language skills to personal maturity. Furthermore, almost all decided to continue their in-class study of French another year. Finally, it was apparent that the warm friendships formed seven months previously had not only endured, but had created an ongoing spirit of international awareness among our students.

NOTES

1. There are many good sources for these types of activities. Among them we recommend the following: L. Robert Kohls, *Survival Kit for Overseas Living* (Intercultural Network/Systran Publications, 1979); Arley W. Levno, *Rencontres Culturelles* (Skokie, IL: National Textbook Co., 1977); "Do's and Don'ts in France—Some Basic Rules of Thumb" (Garden City, NY: Office of International Education, Adelphi University); James E. Becker, "A Leader's Manual for Developing Cross-Cultural Awareness (University of Northern Iowa).

APPENDIX 1:

GENEVA update

HERE WE ARE ON THE WAY TO GENEVA!!!

Criteria for selection into the program

1. First priority will be given to advanced students and seniors enrolled in 3R/4R.
2. Regents students other than seniors will be accepted on the basis of an interview. Interviewers will ask students to discuss their reasons for wanting to go.

Students should be aware that participation in the Geneva exchange program requires:

a. hosting a Swiss student in April (or providing a substitute host);
b. working on fund-raising projects to provide an excursion program for the visiting Swiss students in April;
c. willingness to speak French.

There will be a meeting for all interested (parents and students) on Thursday evening, November 1, at 7:30 p.m. in room H104 at the high school.

Please sign below and return to your French teacher.

Your name _____
I plan to attend the meeting _____
I cannot attend the meeting but am still interested _____

APPENDIX 2:

NORTHPORT-EAST NORTHPORT UNION FREE HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

MEMO TO: Dr. John Black
FROM: Joan Miller
RE: Geneva Exchange (High School French Students)
DATE: November 14, 1979

This year the Foreign Language Department will hold its first homestay total immersion language exchange with a lycée in Geneva, Switzerland. Briefly, the exchange entails a two-week February visit of 20-25 Northport students to Geneva where they will be housed individually in French-speaking families, attend classes with the Swiss students for a week, and participate in other activities arranged by their hosts during the second week.

Northport's counterparts in Geneva will come to visit this school in April for a similar program of language and cultural immersion.

The objectives of this program are to:

1. Provide an authentic language and cultural environment to intensify student motivation to learn and use foreign language.

2. Provide intensive practice in the foreign language through total immersion in a French-speaking environment for an extended period.
3. Deepen international understanding and mutual respect as a result of an experience in a new culture and the formation of reciprocal friendships.
4. Increase student awareness of the needs and interests of others by integration in a new family and by working with a group to plan and carry out the entire exchange program.
5. Help students develop greater maturity and responsibility as a result of the total exchange experience.

School Work Provision:
Students will miss five days, February 25-29, and as is usual, will understand that they are responsible for all class work missed. Students will inform their teachers in advance and secure their general approval by means of the high school prearranged absence form. Individual work plans will be formulated and discussed during the orientation program to be held for all students participating in the exchange.

Criteria for Selection into the Program:
Since the number allotted us by the Swiss is not limitless, we have developed some criteria for selection:
1. First priority will be given to advanced students and seniors in 3R/4R.
2. Regents students other than seniors will be accepted into the program on the basis of an interview. Interviewers will ask students to discuss their reasons for wanting to go.

Activities for American Students in Geneva:
- Scenic excursions to the Swiss Alps, the Jura Mountains, typical small villages along the lakes.
- City tours—Geneva, including parks, museums, churches, landmarks, schools; Bern, the capital.
- Tours of international organizations—UN, Red Cross.
- Tours of Swiss banks, cheese factory, chocolate factories, newspapers.
- Theatre/ballet/concert programs.
- Picnics, dinners, receptions with school officials and local politicians.
- Meeting local sports teams.
- Cross-country skiing excursions.
- Attending school for one week with their host students.
- Supplementary lessons for the Americans on the history/geography, etc. of Switzerland.

Projected Activities for Swiss Students in Northport:
- Tours and excursions to New York—museums, etc.
- Tours and visits to historic restored villages and museums of Long Island.
- Theatre/concert programs at Northport.
- Attendance at typical American sports events.

The exchange program is geared to 20-25 Northport students visiting Switzerland and an equal number of Swiss students to be hosted in Northport.

Costs to be Considered:
- Airfare per student (to be paid by individual students)
- Room and board in Switzerland (to be provided by Swiss hosts)
- Transportation and expenses for excursions in Switzerland (to be provided by Swiss hosts)
- Meals taken outside the home, student-initiated extra activities and incidental personal expenses in Switzerland (suggested estimate to be paid by individual students)
- Insurance costs per student for Switzerland (to be paid by fund-raising)
- Excursions and activities for Swiss students hosted in Northport (to be paid by fund-raising)

Possible Fund-Raising Activities:
- bake sales
- car washes
- candy/flower sales
- film showings, etc.

This memo is being submitted in order that you might give us your approval and present our approval to the Board of Education.

APPENDIX 3:

$ GENEVA

TO ALL STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE GENEVA EXCHANGE

We will be fund-raising to help defray the costs of your excursions in Switzerland, as well as of your trip insurance.

Some fund-raising projects which we are strongly considering are:

1. Bake sales in the Commons (probably weekly)
2. Candy sales in the Commons or outside the school
3. Record drawing
4. Car wash
5. Banquet/dinner
6. Flower sale
7. Movie theatre rental – please suggest a film which you think would attract many students: _____
8. Valentine's Day project – suggestions? _____
9. "Slave days" – suggest jobs you would be willing to do involving cleaning/household chores/yard work/etc. in people's homes: _____
10. Other suggestions for fund-raising in general: _____

We cannot guarantee how much of your excursion costs we will be able to defray – it depends on how hard we all work together at fund-raising! ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE TRIP ARE REQUIRED TO SHARE THE FUND-RAISING WORK EQUALLY – IF YOU DO NOT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS SET AS WE GO ALONG FOR EACH FUND-RAISING PROJECT, WE WILL HAVE TO DEDUCT FROM THE AMOUNT OF MONEY YOU RECEIVE FROM THE EXCURSION/INSURANCE FUND.

Please indicate below your class schedule (including free time), room numbers, your homeroom, and your home phone:

APPENDIX 4:

EXCERPT OF AN INFORMATION LETTER TO PARENTS

February 15, 1980

Dear Parents of Geneva-bound students,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the tremendous cooperation and support you have shown so far! Both you and your sons and daughters have been marvelous in every way – meeting deadlines, making suggestions, providing baked goods for sale, fulfilling requirements, taking initiatives. One of the nicest things about this exchange experience is the group with which we are working!

We would also like to give you an update on what we have been doing at orientation meetings and to double-check that you are aware of and have seen all handouts which have been distributed regarding preparations and details for the trip.

Regarding handouts, your son/daughter has an orientation folder which we feel sure he/she has been sharing with you all along. Just to check, please make sure that you have seen in particular the following material which is contained in it:

1. Passport/customs/baggage information sheet
2. Student checklist—This states the most important tasks that each student must have completed before departure. Please go over this checklist with your child to see how he/she is progressing with it.
3. Emergency contact phone chain—This should be kept near the phone. It will be used both before and during the trip.
4. Fund-raising task sheets
5. Informational dittos and brochures on Switzerland
6. Vocabulary-building dittos and homework assignments

Students have also received make-up assignment forms for each of their teachers. We are enclosing a sample. Also enclosed are (1) an air information sheet; (2) a pre-trip questionnaire; and (3) the final permission slip. Please complete and return the last two very important items to us as soon as possible.

Our orientation meetings are of utmost importance and we have tried to impress this upon the students. We want them to be prepared in the fullest sense of the word for this experience. We have set three goals for these meetings: to help the students amass cultural information; to sharpen their skills in French (through vocabulary-building and imaginary conversational situations); and to develop their ability to deal with the new situation. Some time will be spent helping the students to anticipate what a cultural immersion experience might actually be like (i.e., areas in which the new culture will be sharply different from what they are used to, reactions which they might experience, including loneliness and "culture shock," ways of counteracting those momentary feelings, and the ultimate riches to be gained from close experience with a different culture). We would appreciate your assistance as well in building awareness of what constitutes being a good guest in a new home.

Your sons and daughters have been working extremely hard on fund-raising to defray the cost of insurance and excursions in Switzerland. It has been an excellent experience for them in terms of working toward an important goal as well as getting to know the other students in the group.

APPENDIX 5:

PARTICIPANT'S WAIVER AND RELEASE

(NOTE: THIS IS A SAMPLE ONLY. EACH DISTRICT SHOULD CONSULT ITS OWN LAWYER.)

WHEREAS, certain teachers employed in the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District have arranged a program which is not sponsored by N-EN UFSD but which includes flights between the U.S. and a foreign country, and which may also include transportation between various locations (by aircraft, motorcoach, boat, train, automobile, or any other form of transport, public or private); and

WHEREAS, accommodations or other lodging and meals may be arranged by said teachers; and

WHEREAS, I, the undersigned, do desire and intend to participate in all of said program,

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing, and in consideration of the mutual relationship of others participating in said program, and of my participation therein, I do hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, forever remise, release, and discharge said teachers and N-EN UFSD, their successors and assigns, directors, officers, members, agents, and other representatives, and their heirs, executors, administrators and assigns from any and all manner of action, causes of action, suits, debts, accounts, controversies, damages, claims and demands whatsoever, in law or in equity, which I or my legal representatives may have or may acquire against said teachers and/or N-EN UFSD or their directors, officers, members, agents, and other representatives, by reason of my death or personal injury, or by reason of any loss of or damage to baggage or any other personal property belonging to me, which may occur during or by reason of my participation in said program.

I agree that the teachers, who are acting as chaperones, shall have the right at their discretion to enforce established rules of conduct and/or terminate my participation at my expense for failure to maintain these standards, or for actions or conduct detrimental to or incompatible with the welfare, comfort, harmony or interest of the group and its program as a whole.

I hereby grant the teachers and any of their directors, officers, members, agents and other representatives full authority to take whatever action they consider to be warranted regarding my health (including emergency treatment) and safety, and I fully release all of them from any liability for such actions taken on my behalf.

I have hereunto subscribed this waiver and release on this _____ day of _____, 19_____.
Signature of Participant: _____
Home Address: _____

I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of the participant named above; that I have read the foregoing release; and that I join in the release without reservation, granting my full consent to all actions provided for therein.
Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian: _____
Home Address if Different from Participant: _____
Phone (daytime) _____ Evening _____

APPENDIX 6:

SWISS EXCHANGE MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENT SHEET

To the Teacher: This is to inform you in advance of your student's planned absence and to help you and the student clarify expectations and plan a program of make-up work which will not place the student at a disadvantage upon his/her return. We hope this will also assist them in integrating the Swiss experience with their total school program and educational experience at Northport—for instance, English teachers might like to suggest an alternative assignment such as keeping a journal, social studies teachers a cultural comparison, science teachers an environmental study, etc. Please respond to (a) or (b) or both, and return to the student by February 28, if possible. If you have any questions, please call ext. 146. Thank you for your cooperation!

Sue Drysdale, Fran Killelea
for the Language Department

Teacher _____
Course _____

I am aware that _____ will be participating in a homestay program in Switzerland for two weeks to improve his/her French and to experience immersion in a different culture.
(a) In that connection, I would propose that the following assignment(s) be done by him/her to integrate the Swiss experience with our class work and to replace some/all (indicate which) of the course work which will be missed during the student's absence:

(b) In addition, I require that the following specific course work be completed by the student before his/her return to my class:

Teacher signature and date: _____

I have discussed the above with my teacher and understand what is expected of me with regard to my absence from class.

Student signature and date: _____

APPENDIX 7:

PARENTAL PRE-TRIP QUESTIONNAIRE

We need the following information for the protection of your child.

1. Is there any medication your son/daughter takes regularly?
2. Are there any allergies or disabilities that a doctor should be aware of when treating your son/daughter for the first time?
3. Does your child wear contact lenses?
4. Have you checked your child's health insurance coverage outside the country? Please indicate health insurance name and policy numbers.
5. Is there anything else that you feel we need to know about your child to help him/her to feel comfortable during the homestay/travel experience?

GENEVA: student checklist:

APPENDIX 8:

TO ALL GENEVA-BOUND STUDENTS:

The following are items of crucial importance to you. Please make sure you have done everything on this checklist as early as possible in your planning, and keep it handy to refer to as a double-check.

1. Have you turned in the signed yellow cancellation statement BULLETIN? _____
2. Do you have a VALID passport? _____
3. Have you purchased travellers checks for your personal spending money? (suggested minimum: $150 in $20 denominations) _____
4. Have you acquired a small amount of Swiss francs for immediate use in Geneva if necessary? _____
5. Have you made/purchased a gift to present to your homestay family upon arrival? _____
6. Have you informed each of your teachers of the trip dates and presented your make-up assignment sheet to them for assignments during your absence? _____
7. Have you had your parents check your health insurance coverage abroad? _____
8. Have you turned in
   a. The parental pre-trip questionnaire on health? _____
   b. The parental final permission slip? _____
9. If you wear contacts or are allergic to any drug, have you enclosed a note to that effect in your passport? _____
10. Do you have a copy of the phone chain at home in a prominent place? _____
11. Have you read the suggested packing list? _____

APPENDIX 9:

EXCHANGE GENEVA/NORTHPORT

NOTE: SAMPLE OF ONE TYPE OF QUESTIONNAIRE (DISTRIBUTED AT HALFWAY POINT)

Questionnaire

1. What are your two most important goals here?
2. Please describe to what degree you feel each goal is being achieved, and *explain*.
3. What could we (Mrs. Drysdale and Mrs. Killelea) do to help you better achieve your goals here?
4. Please tell us three things you are pleased about and a few things you are not as happy about regarding your Swiss family.
5. At this point, do you feel you would like your Swiss counterpart to come to the U.S. and stay with you to complete the reverse of the exchange?